

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 01282 171916Z
ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1282

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SP, IT
SUBJECT: KING'S VISIT TO THE VATICAN AND ROME

1. DURING MY CALL FEBRUARY 16 ON FOREIGN MINISTER OREJA AT HIS REQUEST COVERING OTHER MATTERS, HE EXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION OVER THE RECENT VISIT OF THE KING AND HIMSELF TO THE VATICAN AND TO ROME. THE RECEPTIONS GIVEN TO THE KING BY THE POPE AND BY THE ITALIANS WERE PARTICULARLY PLEASING AND, IN THE SPANISH VIEW, OPENED UP A WHOLE NEW ERA IN THE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE HOLY SEE AND WITH ITALY.

2. OREJA SAID THAT THE KING'S PRIVATE MEETING WITH THE POPE HAD GONE WELL AND THAT THE SUBSEQUENT LARGER MEETING INCLUDING HIMSELF AND ARCHBISHOP CASAROLI HAD BEEN A VERY GOOD AND RELAXED ONE. THE POPE, ALTHOUGH PHYSICALLY FRAGILE, WAS MENTALLY VERY ALERT, AND THERE HAD BEEN A GOOD DISCUSSION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE CHURCH. OREJA SAID THAT HE (OREJA) HAD SUPPORTED THE IDEA THAT WHATEVER IS NOW AGREED TO BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE CHURCH SHOULD BE FORWARD-LOOKING AND SHOULD GUIDE THESE RELATIONS FOR A LONG TIME TO COME. AS THE SPANISH SEE IT, THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH
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THE VATICAN SHOULD BE CONDUCTED IN THREE PHASES. THE FIRST PHASE WOULD DEAL WITH SUCH ITEMS AS: A) THE CHURCH'S LEGAL PERSONALITY IN SPAIN; B) THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN AND RELATIONSHIP TO SPANISH ARMED FORCES; C) PERSONAL STATUS QUESTIONS SUCH AS CIVIL MARRIAGES; AND D) SPECIAL PRIVILEGES WHICH BOTH SIDES WOULD BE PREPARED TO RENOUNCE. OREJA INDICATED THAT THESE FOUR

POINTS WERE NOW OPEN FOR DISCUSSION AND MIGHT BE DECIDED BEFORE THE SPANISH ELECTIONS. THE HOLY SEE HAD PRESENTED ITS VIEWS AND THE SPANISH WOULD SHORTLY REPLY. ONE OF THE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS WAS THAT RELATING TO THE STATUS OF CIVIL MARRIAGE, WITH THE CHURCH AT THE MOMENT TAKING THE VIEW THAT A CATHOLIC COULD NOT CONTRACT CIVIL MARRIAGE.

3. FOLLOWING NEGOTIATION AND HOPEFULLY AGREEMENT ON THE ABOVE ISSUES, THE SECOND MAJOR QUESTION TO BE TACKLED WOULD BE THE FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE CHURCH IN SPAIN, INCLUDING PAY FOR PRIESTS. THE THIRD AND FINAL PHASE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, AND WHICH WOULD PROBABLY BE THE MOST DIFFICULT, WOULD RELATE TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION. OREJA SAID THAT THE LATTER TWO MAJOR ISSUES WOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED UNTIL FOLLOWING SPANISH ELECTIONS.

4. TURNING TO THE VISIT WITH THE ITALIANS, OREJA SAID THAT THE SPANISH HAD BEEN PLEASED BY THE LARGE DINNER WHICH PRESIDENT LEONE HAD GIVEN AND BY THE MANY PEOPLE WHO HAD TURNED UP WHO HAD REFUSED ANY RELATIONS WITH SPAIN DURING THE PAST FORTY YEARS. THE CONVERSATION WITH LEONE HAD BEEN A PLEASANT ONE, ALTHOUGH NOT PARTICULARLY SUBSTANTIVE. THE BREAKFAST MEETING OF THE KING AND HIMSELF WITH ANDREOTTI HAD BEEN A GOOD ONE, AND THE SPANISH HAD BEEN MUCH IMPRESSED WITH ANDREOTTI. THE CONVERSATION HAD BEEN LARGELY DEVOTED TO A DISCUSSION OF EURO-CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMUNISM, WITH BOTH SIDES AGREEING THAT EURO-COMMUNISM OFFERED LITTLE POSITIVE FOR WESTERN DEMOCRACIES. FINALLY, OREJA SAID THAT WHILE HE HAD HAD A PLEASANT CONVERSATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FORLANI, IT WAS CLEAR TO HIM THAT FORLANI WAS MORE AT EASE WITH INTERNAL POLITICAL MATTERS THAN HE WAS WITH FOREIGN POLICY. IN FACT, HIS EFFORTS TO ENGAGE FORLANI IN A MEANINGFUL CONVERSATION ON EAST-WEST ISSUES HAD BEEN LARGELY UNREWARDED. STABLER

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition History: n/a
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